

The SWORD of the LORD

Edited by JOHN R. RICE.

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"Back To Bethel"

By REV. W. HERSCHEL FORD, D. D.
Pastor, Kirkwood Baptist Church, Atlanta, Georgia

"And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother."—Gen. 35:1.

Jacob is one of the strangest characters in the Bible. Someone has said that he was the worst and the best man in the Old Testament. When we see him cheating his brother, Esau, out of his birthright, he is at his worst. When we hear him making his vows unto God after his vision of the ladder and the angels, he is at his best. When he puts on an animal skin and deceives his father, Isaac, he is at his worst. When he wrestles with the angel and pleads for a blessing, he is at his best.

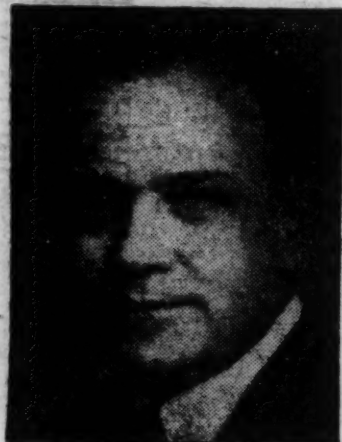
After his sin against Esau, his mother advised him to flee. He left his home in a hurry. He spent his first night under the stars with a stone for a pillow. It was there that God appeared to him in a vivid way. The next morning he made his vow . . . He said, "This is my God and I will follow Him all the days of my life. And of all that which He gives to me, I will give the tenth unto Him." He went on his way—he became rich—he forgot God and the vows he made at Bethel. The years go by and now he is coming home. He has another experience with God—he wrestles with the angel

and prevails. He meets Esau and Esau forgives and forgets, but Jacob is not yet filled with peace—his sin is still on his heart. Then it is that God calls him. "Go back to Bethel," says the Lord. "Go back where you made your vow, back where you first felt My presence—go back and renew your vows and start life over again."

Jacob was glad to go. He had sinned deeply and felt the need of God's mercy. He had cheated others and had been cheated. Life held no peace of heart for him for he had sinned too greatly. He felt the need of God. He heard God's call and went back to Bethel and rededicated his life in that holy place.

Today many of us are far away from God. Back in the years we remember our Bethel. We had an experience with God. He touched us and saved us, but the years have come and gone and they have taken away some of our spiritual freshness. We have neglected our duty and we have backslidden. We have lost the joy of our salvation, and so today we cry out:

Where is the blessedness I knew,
When first I met my Lord?
No matter how far you have gone away from Him, God still loves you and still calls you. You are so busy with the world that you cannot hear Him, but He is
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Dr. W. Herschel Ford

What To Do With Sinning Christians

By EVANGELIST CHARLES E. FULLER

(Sermon preached over Old Fashioned Revival Hour Broadcast November 17, 1946. Mechanically recorded for THE SWORD OF THE LORD.)

With your Bible open to I Corinthians, chapter 5, may we meditate together upon the Word of God.

This first Corinthian epistle gives us certain divinely-appointed rules and regulations by which the church should seek to govern herself. Here in chapter 5, after speaking of divisions and contentions and strifes, of the following of human leaders and that there is but one foundation upon which to build, we are told very plainly how to deal with open offenders against holiness and righteousness; that is, how to deal with flagrant sinning believers. Chapter 6 gives us instructions about what to do in law or civil matters. Then chapter 7 deals with marriage and divorce.

The church of Christ is not the material buildings you see around the country made of mortar and brick and stone. The church, the

body of Christ, is composed of all born-again, regenerated men and women. As born-again people gather together in local assemblies, they form local churches. You take this visible audience—in whatever denomination you belong to,—if you are a member of the body of Christ, that is the important thing. Denominations are secondary.

Christians in New Testament Churches Sinned

As we look into God's Word we find, as Peter tells us, that we are living stones, being built together for an habitation of God's Holy Spirit. And one of the outstanding marks of every gathering or assembly should be evidenced by a life of holiness or an atmosphere of holiness and reverence. Let me read to you just one passage of Scripture—there are many—that tells us what to do as members of the body of Christ. "Who shall ascend into

the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully."
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Dr. Charles E. Fuller

Salvation Is The Gift Of God

By EVANGELIST ROLFE BARNARD

Vinita, Oklahoma

(Sermon preached at Bethel Baptist Church, Chicago, 1946. Mechanically recorded for THE SWORD OF THE LORD.)

When I start to speak to you Yankees, I hardly know how to act! I have a good deal of humor in me, and the Lord has never been able to get it out! Is it all right if you smile around here, now and then? I told a joke one time in the Jarvis Street Church, Toronto. Six months later I was back there to speak at one service, and right in the middle of the sermon the pastor began to laugh. He had just seen the point of the joke I had told six months before! I get in trouble that way!

Down South we kill hogs. We get a barrel, and put some water in it, and build a fire, and get the water hot, so we can get the hair off the hog. Now, that is my job here. Pray for me, sympathize with me, and treat me as if you thought I were a Christian. Don't be too hard on me. I will take

some hide off around here. But this morning I'm going to slip up on the blind side.

I admire the clean, separated lives of so many people in northern churches. You are the "goodest" folks I ever preached to! You are not much good for anything, but you are awfully good! It is a joy to be with you.

A little boy walking down the street in Atlanta, Georgia, had a little cur dog in his arms—dirty, like a cur dog would be—and he came up to a fine building with one of these doormen standing in front. The little boy started to go in, and the fellow said, "You can't go in there, son."

The little boy said, "Isn't this where they are having the dog show?"

The man said, "Sure, but all the rich folks have their dogs in there, and they are all fixed up pretty. You don't expect to win a prize with that little old dog you've got there, do you?"

"No, but I want to go in there,"

he said; "I think it would sure do my dog a lot of good to associate with them." So I believe it will be good for me to be with you here.

As I speak to you this morning, I do not know what I can expect of you. I do not know how much praying you have done, how much visiting you have done, I do not know whether you are pharisaical or Christian; I do not know whether you have been separated from bad things but have never been separated to The Thing. There are
(Continued on Page 2)



Rev. Rolfe Barnard

You Cannot Get Ahead of God!

By EVANGELIST JOHN R. RICE

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, and you shall receive: forasmuch as ye have given, shall ye also receive."—Luke 6:38.

"The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."—Prov. 11:25.

You can't beat God giving! Sometimes people have told me, "You must not encourage people to expect profit by giving to the Lord. They ought to give because of love. If they give expecting something in return, they may not be prospered."

But such people are mistaken. God has encouraged us to expect a blessing for giving. God has given His word, and He never breaks it; there are definite and certain rewards that come when people trust the Lord enough to do what He said and give to His cause.

Study the Scriptures quoted at the head of this article. Jesus plainly said, "Give, and it shall be given unto you." He plainly said that when you give to God you will get it back, said, "good

measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over." He said that with the same measure you measure, you will receive.

Proverbs 11:25 says, "The liberal soul shall be made fat." The way to be prosperous is to be liberal. This Word of God plainly says that "he that watereth shall be watered also himself." The way to get is to give.

In Matthew 6:33 Jesus gave a like promise, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Speaking of food and drink and clothes, the Lord Jesus said that if you seek first the kingdom of God, all these things will be supplied. The way to get is to give.

In Malachi 3:10 the Lord made a solemn business proposition to the Jews of the Old Testament: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Jews were to bring their tithes and offerings to the temple at
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Salvation Is the Gift of God

(Continued from Page 1)

A lot of things I do not know about you this morning. But there is one thing I know and that is that the majority, the vast majority of the lost people that you and the pastor and Brother McGill and the choir and myself—all of us put together—can get into this campaign, the vast majority of them will be saved. Now, that happens all over America. I do know this; that as we give ourselves to witnessing to lost men and women, we can win some of them to Jesus Christ, and I would like for us to make that our great passion. That will be my method. And in order to help every child of God here this morning, and any who are not children of God, (for the message will be double-barreled), I want to speak on the simple subject, "Salvation Is the Gift of God."

My text is found in John 4:10: "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God..." If thou knewest the gift of God, Salvation is the free gift of God to people who do not deserve to be saved and kept out of Hell.

Now a gift may be deserved, but salvation is more than a gift; it is a free gift. The New Testament writers are very clear, very dogmatic, about that. This is a gift that you do not deserve. Every time I leave my little girl says, "Daddy, are you going to bring me something?" I say, "You bet your boots I am!" She deserves it. She is the prettiest, sweetest, smartest girl there ever was. There is not a bit of doubt on earth, in my mind about that! And she deserves it; I think she deserves the best I can give her. But that isn't salvation. Oh, no! She got saved about a year ago when she was just seven years old. But she didn't deserve what she got. She got it through the free gift of God. And that is how people are to be saved. Some will not admit it. People must be brought to the place where they can receive from the offered hand of God a free, undeserved gift.

None Will Be Saved Until God Makes Them Thirsty

In this conversation that Jesus had with this Samaritan woman, I wish to call attention to three truths as He deals with her. First of all, the Lord Jesus Christ created a thirst in this woman's heart.

Modernism goes up and down the land and tells us that all mankind are hungry to know God; but that is only what modernism says. Nobody wants to know God, nobody wants to be saved, nobody wants to have to live in eternity with God, nobody wants to keep out of Hell until God Almighty Himself can create that thirst, through the Holy Spirit, in that heart. There isn't a person listening to me this morning who is saved because you sought the Lord. You are saved because the Lord sought you, gave you a thirst for something you didn't

have, convicted you of your awful need, and you stopped long enough for Him to catch up with you and save you. Jesus created a thirst in this woman's heart. That's our job, isn't it? If we are going to surrender ourselves, as the Lord did, to the Holy Spirit, (for He never did anything but through the power of the Holy Spirit), then we are going to go out here and, humanly speaking, create a thirst in the hearts of our loved ones and our friends and our neighbors for that thing that God has to give to eternity-bound men and women.

The Scripture says here that He "must needs go through Samaria." He changed His course, knowing that the dear woman had come over there to Jacob's well to draw some water. He knew she would get there at noontime, for she was an outcast. The decent church women of Samaria always came to Jacob's Well about the time of dusk; that was their place where they gossiped and talked about their husbands, and borrowed thread and exchanged this, that and the other—that was their place of gathering. This woman of Samaria was not allowed to come to the well at that time, for she lived way back yonder when sin hadn't been glorified yet. She had five ex-husbands, possibly then living in the town, and she was living without the formality of a marriage ceremony in Samaria with still another man. She was an outcast, and decent people did not have anything to do with her. (If she had been alive today, — God pity us, if this will make you mad — I guess she would have been a moving picture actress. Any woman who has had six husbands would surely make good in Hollywood now!) But then she was an outcast; yet she had a soul.

And I can imagine—and I would be reverent about it — I can imagine my Lord saying, "I have to go over there; wait a minute, I will tell you. I will send John over there, and he will win her." But then He said, "No, John is saved, but John is still a son of thunder, and if he got over there he would curse her and call God to rain down fire of Heaven on her. I cannot send John. He would not win her." Then Jesus might have said, "Well, I am awfully busy; I will send Peter over there." On further thought He would say, "No, I cannot do that; Peter is saved but he hasn't got transformed yet. He would tell her to go away, that he did not have any time for her." Finally, He said, "I know what I will do: I will go along with my disciples and get over there about noontime. There will be that woman who needs me, and I will send the disciples into the city to get something to eat." Jesus wanted to get rid of them because they were in the way, at that time, of anybody's getting saved! Many of us make it hard for somebody else to win people to Jesus Christ!

So it came to pass that as Jesus sat there on the well, the woman of Samaria came to drink. "Give me a drink," He said. She was startled. I suspect that no decent man had spoken to her in years; and perhaps no man of any kind had spoken to her in the day time for many years. And here was a man asking her for a drink. More than that, He was a Jew, and she was a Samaritan. The Jews and Samaritans would not have anything to do with each other! Here was this Jew sitting there, and He said, "Give me to drink," right out there in broad daylight, speaking to this poor, scarlet, outcast, adulterous woman!

She was startled, and said: "How is it that thou being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Jesus answered, "If thou knewest the gift of God; and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water."

The woman said to him, "Sir, you haven't got anything to draw with; what are you talking about? This is Jacob's well. We bring our

pitchers here and draw water to drink out of it, and water for our cattle."

Jesus said, "I know, but I am not talking about that." "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."

It isn't but a minute now until she says, "I want that!" Jesus created a thirst. "I want that!" Nobody is going to be saved unless they want to be saved.

My friends, if we would ever make up our minds to it, if we would every study the Bible, if we would ever wait upon God until we were dead certain, we would know that there is one thing we need, and that is that Jesus Christ provided salvation that absolutely meets every need of sinful men and women, and that when a person is saved, he receives something he will never even desire again.

Somebody asks, "Brother Barnard, what do you mean?" I mean that the salvation Jesus offers sinful people does something to and provides something for me, that makes it possible for Jesus to say to this poor woman, "If you get what I am talking about, you will never thirst again. You will never thirst again!" If I had to preach a salvation that just made me happy today, but made me think tomorrow, "I'd better go back and get another drink of that,"—I don't think I could do it. I couldn't do it! But there is one thing dead certain; any body who ever received the free gift of salvation that God offers, through Christ, received something that did the job. The Bible says in Isaiah 32:17, "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." The Bible says in Isaiah 26:3, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." Have you ever read it? Do you believe it?

Sinners Must Face Their Sin

Jesus said, "If you drink of the water that I am talking about, you will never thirst again. It will do the job. He created a thirst, then He revealed a need. This woman came and said, 'I want that. Give me that water, so that, when I get it, I will never need to come hither to draw again. I will never be thirsty again. It will answer the deepest need and desire of my heart. Give me that water to drink'."

Jesus said, "All right, but there is a little matter we have to take care of first." Notice carefully. Jesus brought up the woman's sin, and faced her with an impossible task. Notice exactly what Christ said, when the woman had said she wanted this water that would quench her thirst. "Go, call thy husband." But she couldn't!

She said, "I have no husband." He said, "Thou hast well said,

I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; (and they were still alive, I infer from the context) and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband."

What did Jesus tell this woman to do? To go and get Satan up and Satan out, and then come. He told her to do something she couldn't do, for He wanted her to see that she needed somebody to do something for her that must be done, something she couldn't do herself. So He revealed the need that that woman had and everybody else has, to have something done about sin. SHE HAD TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT SIN. You know, men think they can sin and forget it, but God doesn't forget it. Men think they can sin and it is not so very bad, but God thinks differently. This woman's conscience, perhaps, was so deadened by the ravages of sin that she wasn't even troubled; but every sin she had ever committed was in the memory and in the record of Almighty God. She must be brought face to face with the fact that it is not just a simple matter of wanting to keep out of Hell and go to Heaven when you die; it is a matter of having your sins taken care of. Somebody has to do something about our sins. Somebody must!

Now, this woman wants salvation; she is faced with her sins, faced with them now. She is faced with the terrible truth that she herself cannot fix up the business of her sin. Why, you had just as well get a basket filled high with feathers, go out here today in

windy Chicago, scatter the feathers all over the city, and then come back the first day of April and pick them up. You could do that just as easily and just as surely as you can go back and pick up the tangled strands and threads of your past, and undo the stain and the guilt of your sin, and come with clean hands to God and say, "I want to live with you forever yonder in glory." You can just as easily take an expensive piece of cut glass, smash it to a thousand bits, and put it back together again, as you can go back and pick up your past life and fix the holes. This woman was faced with a need. She needed somebody to do something about her sin. It is not enough to want to go to Heaven. People need to have something done about their sins, if they would spend eternity in a place where the Scriptures say, "Nothing shall go in that defileth."

Jesus Suggested a Remedy

So Jesus, in the last place, suggested (Continued on Page 4)

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Our total assets were, as of January first, \$138,250.29. Our liabilities were \$62,496.88.

Several features make the Sword of the Lord Foundation an unusually good business investment.

1. Our heavy stock of books consists principally of Dr. John R. Rice's books, all of which are selling rapidly. For example, we had printed 20,000 copies of THE HOME—COURTSHIP, MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN, which is very, very popular and has a steady sale in book stores. But the retail value of these 20,000 copies (\$50,000), is so great that we need help to finance this stock and other such books printed or to be printed.

2. The fact that Dr. Rice takes no salary as editor, and no royalty on his books saves us money all the time. Thus The Sword of the Lord magazine and Dr. Rice's books are each paying their way and more, regularly.

3. The only reason we have not built up enough reserves to finance our own heavy stock and our own building is the large benevolent work we carry on. Last year we gave away \$14,397.42 worth of Christian literature. In the six months before, we gave away nearly as much (\$13,607.84). But this is controllable, and we will give away only as much Christian literature as we can afford.

4. We have the good will of the many, many thousands of subscribers to The Sword of the Lord who constantly enlarge the scope of this great Christian publishing work for God. The work has grown to its present volume in some twelve years.

5. Our net worth is constantly growing. In recent weeks, for example, we have been paying off more than \$1,000 per week on our great stock of books, our building, etc., thus decreasing our liabilities steadily.

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With The Editor

Winona Lake Conference on Evangelism, sponsored by THE SWORD OF THE LORD, will be held this year July 6-13 at Winona Lake, Indiana. Be sure to make plans to come Sunday night, July 6, through Sunday afternoon, July 13. The music of the conference will be in charge of Dr. Harry Clarke, song leader for eight years with Billy Sunday, and composer of songs and choruses sung around the world. Many famous song writers and song leaders will be present.

On the program you will hear Dr. Bob Jones, Sr., Evangelist Jesse M. Hendley, Dr. Oswald J. Smith, Dr. Robert J. Wells, Dr. Joe Henry Hankins, Dr. Jack MacArthur, and this editor. We anticipate the largest crowd and the best time we have had. By all means come, if possible.

The Subscription Campaign

My heart is greatly burdened to enlarge the circulation of THE SWORD OF THE LORD. If you believe THE SWORD OF THE LORD is doing a great work in stirring the hearts of people to win souls, in encouraging revival, and in circulating great Bible preaching by the best soul winners, I urge you to get subscriptions for at least one or two others, and help us out in this campaign. The attractive pamphlet, *A Sermon From a Catholic Bible*, will be sent free with each one-year subscription at the regular rate, \$2.00 a year. For Canada and foreign countries the subscription price is \$2.50 a year.

As a matter of faithfulness to God, who commanded us to get the gospel to every creature; as a matter of loyalty to THE SWORD OF THE LORD, which has blessed so many; and as a matter of friendship and helpfulness to others, won't you send us some subscriptions today? Remember that you may send either new or renewal subscriptions on this offer, but please mark them "New" or "Renewal." See subscription coupon elsewhere in the paper. Send five if you can, but if not, send at least one today!

The Carolina Revival Crusade Making Good Progress

The crusade to arrange and promote fifty union revival campaigns in North and South Carolina during the late summer and fall months continues with hard work and much planning and praying. THE SWORD OF THE LORD is directing this crusade with the cooperation of the National Laymen's Evangelistic Association, with headquarters at Charlotte. We have two full-time men on the field now, Mr. William F. Mann and Rev. Raymond T. Cutchin, and three men working part time.

Some twenty-five leading evangelists have agreed to help us in this campaign and Christian leaders in more than forty cities have already agreed to have union revivals. Dr. Bob Jones, Sr., will be in Spartanburg, S. C.; Dr. Hyman Appelman will hold a campaign at Anderson, S. C.; Evangelist Billy Graham will hold a campaign at Charlotte, N. C.; Dr. Jesse M. Hendley has been invited to conduct the union campaign at Burlington, N. C.; Evangelist Jimmie Johnson is to preach in a campaign at Fayetteville, N. C. At present I have committed myself for the following dates: July 20-August 17, Winston-Salem, N. C.; October 26-November 16, Greenville, S. C. This is written at Altoona, Pennsylvania, and I am sorry I do not have the facts about other engagements that are already settled. I know that you will help us pray for this great crusade of union revivals.

As editor of THE SWORD OF THE LORD and director of this crusade, I must be responsible for the preliminary expense of all this advance work. Six of the evangelists have loaned \$550, Mr. Vernon Patterson, president of the National Laymen's Evangelistic Association, helped us borrow \$1,000, a pastor friend of mine gave \$1,000 for the work, and I have put in what I could. Here would be a grand place for an investment that would count for eternity and help win thousands of souls. Will you help me keep

Special Appeal from Dr. Bob Jones, Sr., Founder of Bob Jones College, Cleveland, Tennessee

Dear Friends:

This is being dictated on my arrival in my office after a visit to the Bob Jones University plant at Greenville, South Carolina. It is our plan to move our headquarters to Greenville before August 1. We are assured that the administration building and some of the faculty apartments will be ready for use and occupancy before August 1. We are also assured by the contractor that he will have all the buildings ready for us to open school on our schedule this fall. I think our friends must realize that what has been accomplished under present world conditions is a miracle. Everything indicates that God must be leading. Think of completing in twelve months' time under present conditions a modern, fireproof university plant which will accommodate more than 2,000 dormitory students and will have academic accommodations for 3,000 students.

You friends cannot know the strain under which we have

lived for twelve months, but God has kept both my son and me in good physical condition in spite of the strain. Friends have prayed for us and some have helped answer their prayers by making financial contributions. My friends, we are making a very earnest appeal to you at this time. We need help. You can help us. Every one of you who reads this can help us. Most of you can help us by sending a financial contribution. Practically all of you can get some friends of yours to send a financial contribution and all of you can pray for us. You will not fail us in this time of crisis. You will stand by us. We are working for God. You are interested in His business. I feel sure that all of you know we are rendering unselfish service. The time is short. We need help and we need it quickly. So, please let us hear from you. Thank you and God bless you.

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You Cannot Get Ahead of God

(Continued from Page 1)

Jerusalem. That law is no longer in effect. Now every Christian is to lay by in store, on the first day of the week, as God has prospered him. That is, he should take out of his own the part that is to be dedicated to God, in proportion as God has prospered him. Certainly no Christian should give less than the tithe and many times we ought to give much more. Certainly God asks as much devotion and trust from a Christian in the New Testament as from a Jew in the Old Testament. But the blessed promise is still true. God promises to open the window of Heaven and pour out such a blessing that they would not have room to receive it, if they would give to Him and His cause their tithes and offerings. The reason I know this promise of Malachi 3:10 is still in effect is that I have tried it for years and it still works!

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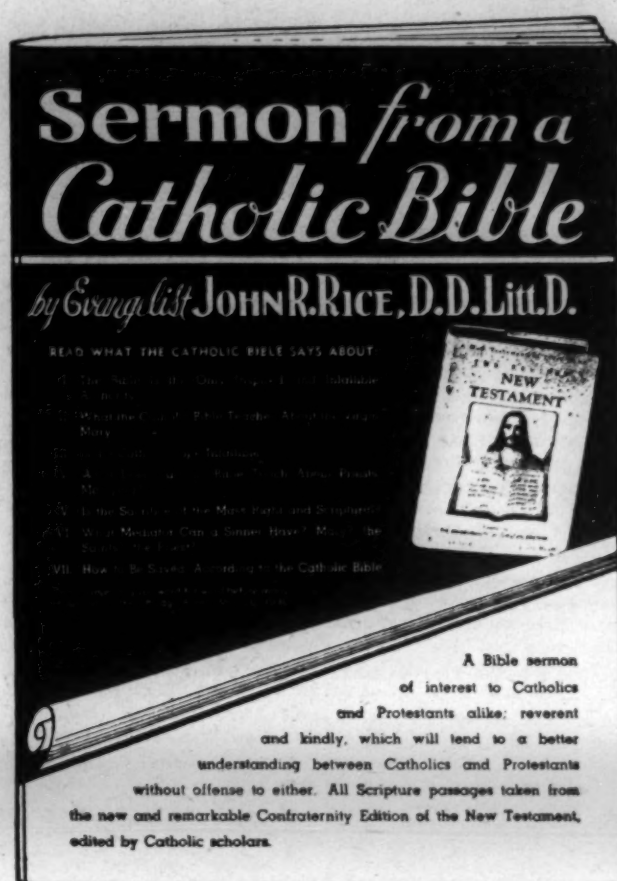
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Salvation Is the Gift of God

(Continued from Page 2)

gested a remedy. Hear me very carefully. As a Christian, I will help you. Enter in with me now. Let us go after lost people. Hear me, lost friend; if you will hear me, I will help you. Do you want to keep out of Hell? Do you? Do you want to go to Heaven when you die? Do you? I am not going to argue now that there is a Hell. The Bible says there is. I am not going to argue now that there is a Heaven. The Bible says there is. I have not come here tonight to debate. I already have that settled. If you do not, I cannot reach you. Do you want to keep out of Hell? Do you want to live up in Heaven with the Lord? Do you? All right. What can we do to get rid of our sin? This woman could not get rid of hers. Jesus said, 'I will tell you about salvation and sin.' Now, suppose this woman wants to be saved, as she does, and she is faced with her sin. Now, how are we going to deal with her?

We will say to the dear woman, "Are you sorry about all your sins? Are you sorry for those five men you lived with in adultery?"

"Yes, I sure am," she replies.

And you say, "Aren't you living now in open adultery here in this city with a man who is not your husband?"

And she will answer, "Yes, I sure am. I would give anything on earth if I could go back and do differently."

I say to the woman, "Do you want to go to Heaven?"

"I sure do; I want this water that you get and then never thirst again."

I say, "All right, you cry about it; you come down to the church—we are having a revival in the Bethel Baptist Church, in Chicago,—you come tonight, and you go down there to the altar. You just weep and sob and tell God how sorry you are; tell Him how you wish you had never lived such a sinful life. The deacons will bring a tub, and you cry until it is full of tears. Then they will take it out, and bring another tub, and you cry it full of tears, then when you have a tub full you look, and you will see that your sins have not been washed away by your tears." Crying, then, will not get the job done.

What on earth can you do?

I will tell you. You can depend on Somebody else to get rid of your sins for you, and that is all you can do; that is all there is to do. You say, "Preacher, don't you think it is all right for a lost sinner to cry?" Sure! But he is not going to keep out of Hell by crying. Something has got to be done. Somebody has to do something about our sins, for a single one of us to escape Hell and gain Heaven. That something was done when Jesus Christ, God's Son, died to pay for sin.

Now listen, if any of you are theologians around here, here is something to chew on. I can possibly understand how Jesus could die for me; I can possibly understand it. But I cannot understand how Jesus could die. Do you want something to chew on? You tell me how the God of this universe could die. You tell me how they could put the Son of God, God the Son, to death. And yet, as a little child, not even making out lines, I can understand it. I tell you now that I am depending absolutely, altogether, on the fact that nineteen hundred years ago the Son of the living God died to pay for my sins. There is no way on earth to keep out of Hell except to depend on that. I do not believe there is anybody who will ever keep out of Hell except people who depend on Jesus' taking care of their sins. I am glad that people who cannot undo their pasts, people who cannot weep their sins away, can be saved from the Hell that is the wages of sin, because God gave His Son to take care of our sins by dying. Do you believe that? It is so!

In Boise, Idaho, the other day, a soldier came to me and said,

"Preacher, there is a colored boy out at the camp whom I want to bring to church, but because you are from the South, he is afraid you do not like the colored people."

I said, "You bring him along. I love them. I was raised by an old Negro mammy."

He finally got that fine-looking colored boy to the services, and showed him to me. As the crowd was gathering I got acquainted with him, and asked if he was a Christian. He said he wasn't. "But," he said, "I'd sure like to be. That's the reason I came tonight; I wanted to know how I could be saved."

I preached that night, and when the invitation was given I went back to him and said, "Don't you want to come?"

He said, "I sure do!"

I said, "Come on."

We got him down at the front, and I sent him over to some personal workers. They couldn't handle him, so finally they called to me. That poor fellow kept saying, "Preacher, is that all you gotta do?"

I said, "No, that is all you can do."

He said, "Is that all you gotta do—just depend on Jesus?"

I said, "Yes, that is all you do. There is nothing else you can do. You can talk about its being simple; you can talk about its being too easy—there is nothing under the sun you can do but depend on Jesus' dying for your sins. That is all you can do; there is nothing else you can do."

In San Angelo, Texas, years ago, we had a big tabernacle meeting. One night during the invitation I happened to look around, and I saw a boy stand up who looked as if he were under conviction of sin. I slipped up to him, put my hand on his shoulder, and said, "Son, are you a Christian?"

He said, "No!"

I said, "Do you want to be a Christian?"

He said, "No!"

I said, "Well, you go on to Hell."

Well, sir, that caused a lot of trouble. He told his mamma, his mamma told his papa; his papa was one of the deacons, and he told all the deacons. They told the pastor—and they actually had some prayer meetings about it. That is one way to get your church to praying, when it looks as if the preacher has ruined everything! They all agreed that I should not have told him to go on to Hell. Well, I do not know whether I should have or not, but I had, anyway, and I could not undo it. I never will forget him. I will call him Longneck, because it seemed like he had a neck that long. (I don't think it was quite that long, really). But he got mad and he said he wasn't coming back while I was there. The next night he wasn't in the crowd. As I was preaching, I looked way back at the back of the tabernacle and I saw old Longneck's head; he was out there at the doors, looking in. He wouldn't come in, but he wanted to hear. When the invitation was given, I walked the length of the tabernacle. Everybody turned and looked around to see what I was going to do. Old Longneck didn't run; I put my hand on his shoulder, as he stood outside the door, and said, "Sam, are you a Christian?"

"No!"

I said, "Do you want to be a Christian?"

"No!"

I said, "Keep on going to Hell," and turned around and walked back.

Well, the fat was in the fire. The next night as the crowd was gathering I walked around the tabernacle and spoke to some of the people. They came and sat in cars. The windows of the tabernacle were open, so they could sit in the car and listen. I passed a young man, said "Hello," and went on. Finally I came around again and he was still standing there. Feeling somewhat rebuked for not having spoken to him more

cordially, I walked up and said, "I'm Brother Barnard."

He said, "So-and-so is my name."

"Are you a Christian?"

"No."

"Do you want to be a Christian?"

"I sure do!"

Well! I started rolling up my sleeves! He and I were going to have some fun! I h'a v e no time for a smart-aleck who doesn't want to be saved; but I have lots of time to deal with a fellow who has sense and wants the salvation that God provided through Jesus Christ our Lord. And if I can, I will help such a person. I rolled up my spiritual sleeves, got my Bible, and started dealing with that boy. Soon he lifted his hand and said, "Could I say just a word, Preacher?"

I said, "Sure!"

He said, "You don't have to go over all that for me—I understand it all. You don't have to try to get me in the notion. I want to be saved worse than anybody you ever saw, Preacher," but he said, "preacher, I can't be saved."

"You can't?"

"No," he said.

"How do you know?"

"Well, some preachers have told me I couldn't be."

I said, "That's interesting!"

Then he told me this story. "Fourteen years ago I got married. My wife and I lived together for two years. We fought like cats and dogs. Finally it ended in a separation and a divorce. Three years ago I married again. I wasn't interested in religion back there. It wouldn't have made any difference to me what the Bible taught. But about e i g h t months ago I got concerned and started going to church. I would try to read my Bible, and, if I read my Bible right, preacher, I have committed adultery."

I said, "If what you told me is true, you have committed adultery, before a righteous, sin-hating God."

He said, "Well, that's the way it looks to me. I will just have to go to Hell, won't I?"

I said, "No, I don't know why you should."

"Well," he said, "that's what the pastor told me."

And he had been to see eight different preachers, and they had all told him that in order to be saved he must divorce the wife he had, go back and remarry this first wife, and then when he got that all fixed up, God would save him. They had that poor boy believing that, and he said, "I can't do it." He said, "I can't divorce the wife I've got. I love her. But," he said, "I don't want to go to Hell. I would divorce her, but I can't get the other one to marry me. She is married again, and she hates me, and she wouldn't marry me if I were the last man on earth. So there is no way on earth for me to fix it up."

I said, "You're right. You're played out. You are a gone-goner. You can't fix it up. But I know somebody who can fix it for you." I turned to the fourth chapter of John and told him about a poor Samaritan woman that had five living ex-husbands and one she was living with without marriage, and how the Lord Jesus Christ faced her with her sin and the fact that she couldn't undo her past. I showed how He then revealed Himself to her as the Messiah, the One who should die for sinners; about how she accepted the salvation He wrought out through His blood, and went and turned the city upside down and had a revival.

Well, that old boy was like a fish biting at a hook. He took it, hook, line and sinker, and when he was satisfied, I said, "Go in, and go up on the platform, and stop the singing, and tell the people what happened to you!" And he did! By the time I got in there, he had already told his story, and the singing had begun again—an invitation hymn. As I came up on the platform, here, in the back of the tabernacle, a woman with a little six-months' old baby began to sob. Shortly she came, and we showed her how to get saved. It was his wife.

Soon a grey-haired woman and a grey-haired man began to sob,

and here they came. They were religious church members who believed in salvation by character and keeping the law and all of that. There they came and we told them about the free gift of God's grace, through Jesus' blood. They were the parents of this boy, and they were saved. I got up on the platform. His Adam's apple was old Longneck was there, on the platform. His adam's apple was just a working, and the tears were streaming down his cheeks. I looked again; He had the song-book turned upside down, and he was pretending he was singing! I didn't yet know the connection. I walked up to him, and, loud enough for everybody in the tabernacle, even over the singing, to hear, I said, "Son, are you a Christian?"

He said, "No."

"Son, would you like to be a Christian?"

"I sure would!" he said.

Then he began to bawl. He threw his arms around me and said, "Preacher, please forgive me. I didn't mean it. I want to be saved." Pretty soon we were able to tell him how to keep out of Hell. There was the boy who didn't want to be saved; he was saved, by God's grace; and his brother who thought he couldn't be saved was saved, by God's grace; and his wife and his mother and his father all of them came in the same door, and all of them came in by trusting in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ to keep them out of Hell.

Thank you for listening to me. I have kept you a little late, but I am not going to ask you to forgive me. Just a minute and we are

(Continued on Page 5)

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What to Do With Sinning Christians

(Continued from Page 1)

ceitfully" (Psa. 24:3, 4).

It is one thing to profess, to say that you are a member of the body of Christ: it is another thing to live according to His standard. Sometimes in the local assembly unholy happenings occur. Paul had heard of a very serious thing happening in the Corinthian church. They had written him about some of the internal conditions, and he told them that when he would come to them he would come with the rod of discipline. So he says, "It is reported commonly [common gossip, not something hidden] that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife" (that is, his stepmother). We might as well be plain and outspoken. In the Corinthian church was an outstanding case of sin.

Churches Should Exclude Outrageously Sinning, Impenitent Members

How is the local pastor to deal with sin and sinning members in his flock? I receive letters from all over the country, and it seems that nearly every church has some problem to deal with, especially along this line. What a shame for a man to be a member of the body of Christ and be in such deep sin as to do what even a heathen Gentile would not do! How can one handle that man in a case of outstanding sin? If there ever needed to be a cleaning up in the body of Christ in this generation, we certainly need it to be cleansed now.

Now notice what God's Word says: "And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, [here is the thing to do] To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

What does it mean to deliver such an one unto Satan? First of all, let me say that it is God's order where there is common knowledge of outstanding sin, for the members of the body of Christ, the official leaders of the church, to go to that person and pray with him and not receive an accusation except in the presence of two witnesses. We are to go to that person who is living in deep, scarlet, outstanding sin and pray with him. If that man refuses to repent and be restored to fellowship, then the local body should take action, and he should be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved. There should be a purging of that man from the church roll. When a man persists in sin, he should be put outside the camp, to go back into the world and find out that sin is abhorred not only by men and women who love God, but even the world will probably turn its back upon him. I do not know of anything more heart-breaking than for one to name the name of Christ and to be living in open sin, or for the people in his town to point to him and say, "There is the reason I will not attend your church." I tell you, that is the reason why revivals cannot be held in some churches. There is open sin among the members of that local assembly. You know that I am speaking the truth! God put it down here. Put him outside the camp, but be careful as elders and pastors in the church that you yourself are in the right position as an official or officials in the body to do such action. And if he repents and confesses his sin, restore him to fellowship, but

do not give him a place of prominence.

But First, Try Earnestly to Win an Offending Brother

Another Scripture I want to call to your attention is Matthew 18:15-17. This is the way to proceed and this is practical. Every day we have to face these things. And if you received the mail that we receive, you would understand why I am giving these practical messages: "More-over if thy brother [of the household of faith] shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." I do not know whether I am wrong in saying this, but if the church of Jesus Christ today would follow the Scriptural application, I wonder if there would not be a great pruning of the present day membership. I am not judging anyone, but I want to tell you that there is a looseness in the body of Christ today, with so much of the world in the church that you can hardly tell a local assembly, sometimes, from the world.

First Timothy 5:19, 20 say: "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." Judgment should begin at the house of God. We are told in I Corinthians the fifth chapter to "Purge out therefore the old leaven." "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" You let a sinning man whom everyone knows is sinning have fellowship in the church and the first thing you know the church will become leavened, permeated.

In the twelfth chapter of Exodus, we read that the first day after the Israelites applied the blood on the two sideposts and over the top, they had this instruction; from the very first day they were to search through their houses and put away all leaven, as leaven is a type of evil. Now notice I Corinthians the fifth chapter again, "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

Some Should Be Turned Over to Satan for Punishment

Turn with me to I John 5:16. This teaching needs to be given out. "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death, that is, if he is repentant and confesses his sin, and walks in the light and has fellowship, then, with the Lord. All right. "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it." The meaning is simply this: if you proceed along God's line and go to that sinning brother and he refuses to repent and confess and forsake that sin, that is a sin unto death. Deliver him to Satan, and Satan under his rule, will destroy that person, the body of his flesh. And yet God says that the spirit shall be saved. Oh, how we need to have our thoughts corrected! How we need to be instructed! How we need to have the local assembly cleansed!

But the Bible also says, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." And in the sixth chapter of Galatians we find these words, "Brethren,

[speaking to the members of the body of Christ,] if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." But, if that member refuses to repent and forsake his sins, turn him over to Satan. It is a sin unto death. Don't even pray for him. We are dealing with serious things when we deal with God's things. So He says, "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump. . . . Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. . . . Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolators. . . . But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, [that is, one whose tongue is loose at both ends,] or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one not to eat," or to fellowship with, when you come to the Lord's Supper. Be mighty careful that your own sins are confessed. Oh, I wish somehow that the body of Christ could be cleansed in these days, that it would stand like a rock, like a veritable depository of holiness and righteousness, so that the unrighteous could say, "There is a place where God meets His own," and there would be fear and trembling on the part of the unsaved.

Christian Should Not Go to Law With Christian; a Better Way

Now, quickly, in this sixth chapter, just this word about going to law, "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?" Let me say this to you,—it is very practical,—if a fellow brother of the members of the body of Christ has ought against you, go to him. Don't you dare take a fellow brother to the law and go before the unconverted Gentile judges. You should be able to settle your matter on your knees before God and before the elders and the officers of the church. The idea of any professing member of the body of Christ going to the world elements to have their differences settled when there is One upon the throne who will give you wisdom as to what to do! By the way, it is very practical and will save you a lot of money. Amen! And it will save you a lot of heartaches and you win your brother. And now notice what He says, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" You and I someday are going to be upon the judgment seat with Christ, and we are going to judge the world. "And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" Can't you settle your differences here as brothers in Christ? If that brother has ought against

you, go to him and say, "Forgive me. Let us just settle this matter. Do I owe you some money? Have I unjustly taken something from you? Forgive me." Pay it back with triple interest, and win that brother.

I remember several years ago a man in a certain church didn't like me. I had some dealings with him, and he tried every way to undermine me, every way to get me out of my position as manager of a packing house. One day he and his wife were taken ill. They had no children. I felt definitely led to go down to his home. There I found that the telephone was out of order, and both of them ill. I went into him and I said, "Brother So and So, can't I go over to the city and get some milk. Can't I get some bread? Can't I help you?" Brother, he turned his face to the wall and began to cry like a baby, and from that day on he was one of my best friends. Just a little incident to show what you can do. Oh, let us live like we should!

I will not have time to go into it, but He talks about in the sixth chapter, the sanctity of the marriage, and then about relations one to another, and He closes with this, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" Listen, young people, if you will realize that in your body the Holy Spirit dwells to reveal the things of Christ unto you, it will solve the problems of worldly amusement as to where your feet would go. If you will realize that Christ is in you, the hope of glory, that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, how can you go into places and touch things that will short-circuit the power and dissipate the power of the Holy Spirit? I beg of you to keep yourself en-

cased, surrounded by the Word, realizing that you are not your own, that you are bought with a price. Therefore God says, "Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit." Can you glorify Him with certain worldly amusements? If you will get the picture that in you God, the Holy Spirit, is dwelling, then you will act like the temple of the Holy Spirit and you will honor Him, being in the world but not of the world. And it will solve your problem. Where would God have my feet go? What would He have my hands do? What would He have my tongue say? What thoughts would He have in my mind? Let the Holy Spirit speak to you. Become separated and a vessel meet for the Master's use. Let's bow our heads in prayer.

PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, may each and every member of the body of Christ realize our high calling in Thee. Our citizenship is in Heaven but we are in this wicked world under the curse and domination of Satan. May we walk as worthy witnesses, holy, unblameable in Thy sight. O God, speak to every heart and when the church is cleansed, back in fellowship, then the unsaved will cry out, "What must I do to be saved?" God, bless the pastors. Straighten up the churches. And when someone in the church will not bow to Thy Word, may he be put outside the camp until he is repentant and humble and cleansed. Heavenly Father, I realize I have been speaking to the believers, but speak to the unsaved now.

To those in radioland that need Christ, will you kneel by your radio and say, "God be merciful to me, a sinner. Same me for Christ's sake."

Will you do that? God bless you.

Salvation Is the Gift of God

(Continued from Page 4)

going home. Listen: It was settled that I would be a preacher before I was born. Before I was born my mother and father gave me to Jesus to preach.

It will be settled for your children, if you will go back to the Bible, and be Bible-loving fathers and mothers. But I am not depending on the fact that I am a preacher to keep me out of Hell. No sinner will go to Heaven. Jesus said so. I have had some prayer answered.

If we could get the ear of God, we could have a great revival and turn this country upside down, couldn't we? But we haven't been able to do it. I don't know much about prayer, but I have had a few prayers answered, but I am not depending on that to keep me out of Hell, because I can take the Bible and show you where God answered

the prayers of unsaved people. He answered many prayers in fox-holes. That doesn't mean boys got saved—that just means God answers prayer. I've won a few people to Jesus; but you don't have to be a Christian to be a soul-winner. That's right! So I can't depend on that. I will tell you what I am depending on. Nineteen hundred years ago the Son of God hung on a tree, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish. And I believe it. Do you? Do you? He paid for my sins.

I hear the Saviour say,
"Thy strength indeed is small,
Child of weakness, watch and pray;
Find in me thine all in all."

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"Back to Bethel"

(Continued from Page 1)

still calling and you should answer in the words of the song:

Back to Bethel I must go,
Back where the rivers of sweet
waters flow.

Back to the true life my soul
longs to know,

Bethel is calling, and I must
go.

Back to Bethel—What does it
mean to us today?

I. Back to Bethel Means Back to a Remembrance of Our First Love

Jacob's first love was for God, but he had forgotten Him in the mad rush. Surely we love Him best of all, too, but we often are indifferent to Him. In the Revelation Jesus rebuked a certain church, saying to them, "You have left your first love." That is true of many of us. Once we found our highest joy in serving Jesus, but some of us have been drifting with the tide; other loves have entered and God has been left outside of our hearts in the cold.

A Christian man was saying good-bye to his son. He put his hand upon his shoulder and said to him, "Wherever you go, always remember whose son you are." Wherever we go we should remember that we belong to God—that He is our first love. When temptations come our way, let us say, "I cannot do this thing for I belong to God."

Here is a girl who has many boy friends, but one day the right one comes along. She loves him with all of her heart and surrenders to him. He must go away for a while, but he knows that her heart is his. While he is away others come in and they want to claim a part of her love, but she says, "No, it's all for him." She is true to her love every second of her life. We go along in life and this old sinful world is our friend, but then Jesus comes into our heart and we surrender to Him. Satan comes along and says, "Give me a part of your life." Always we should say to him, "No, Jesus has the first place in my heart and life." What a pity that it hasn't been that way! Many of us have forsaken our first love and today we love some of the things of Satan more than we do the things of God. But God is calling us back to Bethel and back to our first love.

What did Jacob say to his family when he started toward Bethel? Here it is: "Put away the strange gods that are among you." They gave up their strange gods, and Jacob buried them under an oak. We need to dig a grave for our false gods. We need to tear them out of our lives and bury them forever.

Back to your first love means back to the right life and the right spirit. It means back to a life where God is put above all else in all things. Lord Melbourne went to church in London one day. When the sermon was over he rushed out of the church saying, "That preacher is a fool. He seems to think that religion has something to do with a practical personal life." My friends, it does. We ought to get back to our first love and carry God with us in every walk of life.

A boy in Minnesota died of diphtheria. His family cleaned out the house and fumigated every room, except a small closet which was never used. They then moved back into the house. Some days later a shawl was taken from the closet and wrapped around one of the children when they went out to see friends. There was a diphtheria germ in that shawl. The disease broke out again and three lives were lost. My friends, sin is more deadly than a diphtheria germ. We cannot afford simply to clean up a part of our lives and leave the spots that will destroy our spiritual strength. We need to clean it all up and come back to God.

II. Back to Bethel Means Back to the Better Life We Once Knew

A child climbed up into his father's lap and said, "Daddy, is God dead?" The father answered, "Why do you ask that, my child?" The little boy said, "Well, I don't hear you talking to Him

any more." The father dropped his head upon his bosom in shame. Do you recall how you used to pray? Have you quit praying? God isn't dead—but He might as well be for many people for they never pray.

A young man was led to the electric chair and with his last words he said, "If I had had the right kind of father and mother, this would never have happened." A gambler in the penitentiary said, "My father was to blame—when I was a child he taught me to drink and curse." Oh, if our parents are people of prayer, these things will not happen! But you know how it is—parents go on and on and forget God and never pray and then in their hours of trouble they cry out unto Him:

Oh what peace we often
forfeit,

Oh what needless pain we
bear.

All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer.

An eccentric country preacher, going along a country road, stopped at a nice home. He wondered if the people there were Christians. He knocked on the door and when the woman came to the door he said, "Madam, does Jesus live here?" She was absolutely astounded and could not reply. He repeated the question and still she could say nothing. The old preacher went on down the road. That night the woman told her husband about this amazing experience. "Didn't you tell him we belonged to the church?" he asked. "No," she replied, "he didn't ask about that." "Didn't you tell him that we gave our money to the church?" "No," she said, "he didn't want to know about these things. He wanted to know if Jesus lived here, and that is different." It is different. I do not ask you about your membership and your gifts, but I do ask you this question—does Jesus live in your heart and home? Go back to Bethel and throw yourself at His feet and pour your heart out and pray to Him.

III. Back to Bethel Means Back to the Bible

Henry Van Dyke said, "A man who has been through one hundred high schools and universities and who does not know the Bible is not an educated man and never can be." Daniel Webster said, "The Bible is the secret of the blessing which rests upon our country. If we neglect it our doom will be sudden and complete."

A minister taught an old man to read. Later on he met the old man's wife and asked her, "How is your husband getting along with his reading?" "Fine," she replied. "I guess he can read the Bible well by now, can't he?" asked the minister. "Oh, he is out of the Bible and into the newspaper now," said the woman. I am afraid that is true of too many of us today. We have graduated from the Bible into every other kind of reading matter in the world, and God's Word is neglected and our souls are drying up.

A ship was wrecked in the South Seas. The sailors climbed into the small boats and pushed off. Suddenly two of them jumped into the water and swam back to the sinking ship. They had forgotten the compass. It was the only guide through the unknown waters, and it was worth risking their lives to get it. The Bible is our compass and our guide. . . . We cannot afford to neglect it. Yet too many Christians have laid it aside and the dust settles on it and it is never read.

What would we do without the Bible? You may not read it, but today you are enjoying the many blessings which it has brought to the world. Science and philosophy and worldly wisdom cannot answer our deepest questions. Here is a widow who has lost her only son. She wants to know if she will ever see him again. Let science answer her. "Science," we say, "we have put away the Bible. We want a scientific answer. Will this woman ever see her son again?" But there is no answer. Science and philosophy

have nothing to say. Baffled by it all, we fall back on the Bible and we hear that great book saying, "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live again." "So shall we ever be with the Lord." "I go to prepare a place for you." "This corruptible must put on incorruption." The Bible is the only book which can answer life's great questions for us. We cannot put it away. Back to Bethel means back to the Bible.

IV. Back to Bethel Means Back to Active Service for the Lord

Jacob went back to Bethel and from that day on he lived a life of faithful service.

Sometime ago I was riding along a road in North Carolina. By the side of the road I saw a piece of road machinery which had been left there many, many months before. It had been used to build this mountain road, but now it was set aside and was absolutely useless and in the way. Many Christians are like that. Once they were active; they led in great spiritual movements; they taught in large Bible classes; they backed up the pastor in a great program, but now they have quit their work and they are doing nothing for the Lord or man.

I heard sometime ago of a man who once had a Sunday School class running into the thousands. But the years have come and gone and now he takes no active part in the work of the kingdom. We talk about "has-beens" in baseball. They are the men who once played a great game, but who are not equal to it today. We have too many "has-beens" in our churches. Oh, for men who actually serve God all of the days of their lives!

Cardinal Woolsey, speaking in one of Shakespeare's dramas, said, "O Cromwell, Cromwell, had I but served my God with one half the zeal I served my king, He would not in mine age have left me naked to mine enemies." If many Christians served God as they serve their business interests and themselves, life would be better for them and Heaven would hold a richer reward for them.

Do you remember the first service that you gave to Christ? It brought you unspeakable joy. But you have drifted out of this service. You have tried everything else and there has been no happiness in it. Bethel calls you back today to a happy and active service.

Sometimes it takes a great sorrow to bring us back to Bethel. We go merrily on our way forgetting God until we are shrouded with the pall of death or suffering. Then we cry out, "O God!" But joy comes to us when we go back to Bethel. It came to Jacob and it will come to us.

Sometime ago one of my members, who was the express agent in our city, told me that at dawn of a certain morning he would release some carrier pigeons which had been shipped from a loft thousands of miles away. I went with him to the station. The coop of pigeons was taken from the railroad car in which they had been traveling. The agent released the door of the coop and the pigeons flew out and straight into the air. They circled around

several times, then headed straight to their home loft. The next day a telegram came saying they had arrived safely. The pigeons did not belong in a lowly coop. Neither do we as Christians belong on the low plains of a worldly life. Bethel is our home and Jesus is our first love. Let us today take our bearings and head straight toward the heavenly home. Let us remember our first love. Let us get back to a good prayer life. Let us make the Bible again our daily companion, and let us give our days in active service to the Lord.

In a certain cathedral in Denmark is a large marble statue of Christ. A cynical man came into the cathedral one day and stood in the back of the building. He said to the scrub woman, "I see nothing great about that statue." The scrub woman said, "You must go a little closer." He walked a little way down the aisle and the woman said, "You must go a little closer." Three times this happened until at last he was standing at the base of the statue and looking up into the face of Jesus. He looked for a long time

and then read the inscription on the base of the statue, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." The man fell upon his knees, crying out, "My Lord and my God!" Are you far away from Christ today? God is calling you to come closer. Come back to Bethel. Come and learn anew of the beauty and love and greatness of Jesus. Then go out to serve Him until He calls you home.

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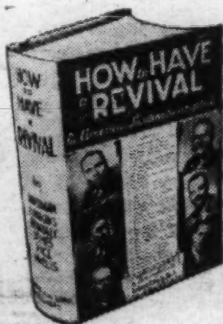


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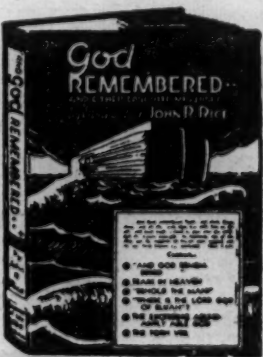
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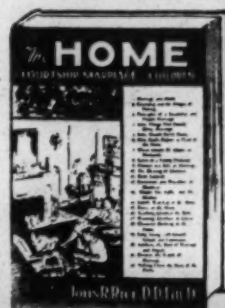
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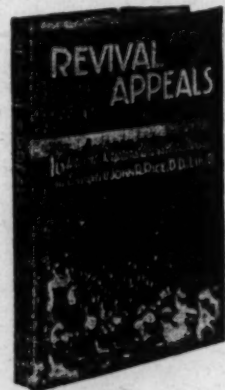
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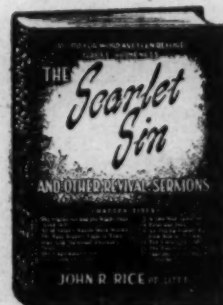
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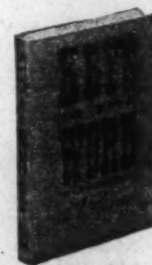
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